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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Rumania

SUBJECT Historical Background Data on Medical Research/
Activities of the Institut Cantacuzino/Examples of
Communist Collaboration by Prominent Doctors

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1. Medical research in Rumania before 1947 was concentrated on public health and epidemiology. Rumania always faced the threats of epidemics spreading westward from the USSR and also had to deal constantly with bubonic plague, cholera and typhus as endemic diseases.

Institut Cantacuzino

2. Most of the research work devoted to solving the public health problems was done in the field of bacteriology at the Institut Cantacuzino in Bucharest. This Institute was founded circa 1908 and made its most significant accomplishments, from a research point of view, under the able leadership of its director and namesake, Dr Cantacuzino, who died in 1932 or 1933. His personal research concerned the general mechanisms of the diseases prevalent in Rumania, especially cholera, diphtheria and scarlet fever, but he was also an imaginative and exacting administrator who maintained a high standard of applied research at the Institute.
3. A complete record of the research work carried out at the Institute can be found in copies of the Archives Franco-Roumaines de Bacteriologie. This journal was published in Paris by the firm Masson.
4. In addition to the research work carried out at Institut Cantacuzino, the institution also operated a plant for the commercial production of vaccines and a great variety of other drugs of all types. The income from the pharmaceutical sales was applied to the research work at the Institute. The Institute itself was officially owned by the Rumanian Government, although it operated as an independent entity as far as the administration and allocation of its funds was concerned. It also received substantial government subsidies to augment its profits from drug sales.

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5. In 1947, after complete Communist control had been established, the Soviets pressed a demand order for huge quantities of diphtheria antitoxin. The order far exceeded the normal productive capability of the plant. The antitoxin was normally taken from a group of two or three hundred horses which the Institute kept on hand for antitoxin production. As this number was inadequate, the Soviets insisted on the purchase of more horses by the Institute to fill their order. But almost as soon as the horses were delivered the Soviets cancelled the entire order, stating that their demands had been supplied from another source.
6. The entire top echelon of the Institute consisted of bacteriologists who had studied in France, and who had spent varied amounts of time working at the Pasteur Institute. Cantacuzino himself was considered one of the outstanding pupils of Metchnikoff at the Pasteur Institute and was a close friend and ranking colleague of Dr. Roux. At all times the bulk of all Rumanian doctors and medical scientists received their education in France. This grew out of the growing appreciation of the fact that Rumania was, after all, a Latin country and that France showed more promise than any of the other Latin countries from the point of view of the student of science.
7. [redacted] in 1948 the director of the Institute Cantacuzino was Professor Ionescu-Mihaesti, who had taken over the administration of the Institute in 1933, after the death of Dr. Cantacuzino. If he is alive today (1954) he should be about 70 years old. Under Ionescu-Mihaesti's regime the Institute faded in the field of research and concentrated more on production and participation in public health projects. This was primarily attributable to Ionescu-Mihaesti's own inclinations and background. Although he had worked well under Cantacuzino as his assistant, he did not possess his predecessor's scientific imagination. He was merely a careful and competent technician with no particular flair for research. Although he studied at the Rockefeller Institute in the US and at a similar institution in London, as well as at the Pasteur Institute, he gained almost no international reputation after taking over the Institute at Bucharest. 50X1-HUM
8. The second-in-command on the Ionescu-Mihaesti team was Professor Mihai Ciuca, who served as assistant director for the Institute. Both of these men were still in office [redacted] both of them had given every indication that they would do anything necessary in appeasing the Communists as long as they could keep their jobs. They were quick to take the aloof air of scientific objectivity in rationalizing their compromises with the new government. 50X1-HUM
[redacted] 50X1-HUM
9. Mihai Ciuca is about 70 years old as of today. He was quite well known in international medical circles, not so much from a scientific point of view, but rather through his work in the promotion of international public health programs while he served for 10 years as a Rumanian delegate to the League of Nations. In this capacity he traveled to foreign countries on numerous medical missions for the League. [redacted] 50X1-HUM
[redacted] Professor Ciuca's scientific objectivity had won him the honor of being selected as a member of a Rumanian scientific mission into the USSR.
10. The third man in the managerial hierarchy at the Cantacuzin Institute was Prof. Combiescu, who was serving as chief of the Vaccine Department at the Institute. [redacted] If still alive he should be about 56 years old (in 1954). 50X1-HUM
Combiescu was primarily a basic researcher. He was meticulous and thoroughly dependable. Unfortunately for his career, he was rather outspoken in his criticism of the Communist regime [redacted] 50X1-HUM
- Research Contributions of Individuals and Their Relations to the Communist Regime
11. Outside of the Institut Cantacuzino, the only significant medical research was carried out by individual doctors along the lines of their specialties. As these were isolated cases they made up no recognizable national trend in research.
12. One of these men was Professor Danielopol of Bucharest, who conducted research on the normal and pathological effect of drugs on the human heart and also the

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relation of the heart to the nervous system. Danielopol became internationally known for this work. [redacted] he is still living. If so he should be [in 1954] about 66 years old. He received the bulk of his medical training in France, although he spent some time at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin. He worked for a time under Cantacuzino and was known to be a close friend of his. During the 1930's Danielopol was on the clinical staff of the University of Bucharest. But in 1937 he was offered a position on the directoral staff of a new hospital in Bucharest.

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[redacted] It was well equipped with modern laboratory facilities available for research.

13. At this time he became associated with the activities of the Liberal Party and during World War II was more or less ignored by the Nazi-oriented regime of General Antonescu, although he was known to have opposed it. In September 1944 he was named Minister of Health by the interim government but resigned in March 1946 and went back to his position at the hospital in Bucharest.

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14.

15. As far as research studies were concerned, one of the most enthusiastic Rumanian doctors was the late Dr Gregory Popa, who died in 1948. He worked for some time in the US at the Rockefeller Institute and later translated a US textbook on anatomy into the Rumanian language. His outstanding research contribution was the discovery of a special hypophysis vessel formation.

16. Another deceased Rumanian medical researcher was Dr (fnu) Bagdasar, who died in early 1947. His research work was restricted to limited experimentation in the

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[redacted]
The new regime awarded him a high position in the Ministry of Health just before his death.

17. Another Communist in Rumanian medicine is Dr John Niculescu, who has done some research in the field of blood bacteriology and has specialized in work on mid-brain pathology. [redacted] he was professor of Pathology at the University of Bucharest.

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23. One of Parhon's outstanding pupils at Iasi was [redacted] Dr Leo Ballif, a graduate psychiatrist and professor of Neurology at Iasi. Ballif was first educated in Rumania. Then he studied under Sherrington in London during the late twenties with some work being carried out in France. During the thirties he studied under Parhon.

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24. Psychotherapy in Rumania was oriented away from the Freudian school and psychoanalysis, although not outlawed as it was in the USSR, was not often used clinically. At that time heat therapy was in use and chemotherapy was being experimented with, as was hypnosis to a lesser extent.

25. Ballif specialized in endocrinology, a field in which he is quite capable of producing serious research of a high caliber.

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26. Ballif's wife was a Jewess, a fact which under the Antonescu regime would have made his position quite uncomfortable. But through several of his good friends he was able to remain "ignored" by the police and by the officials of the Ministry of Health until the end of the war. After the Soviets moved in Ballif turned into an avowed Communist and rose steadily in their ranks until he reached the position of a director of Guza Voda University at Iasi.

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